

**MINUTES
STATE PRESERVES ADVISORY BOARD
JANUARY 6, 2006**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Neil Bernstein, Chair
Robin Fortney
Cindy Peterson
Liz Christiansen
Armando Rosales
Laura Jackson

STAFF PRESENT

John Pearson
Daryl Howell

ADVISORS PRESENT

Bob McKay

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Neil Bernstein called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM on January 6, 2005 at the Wallace State Office Building in Des Moines, Iowa.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Add: 7a - Preserve Visits
 7b - Updates on Rock Island Preserve
 7c - Iowa Conservationist update

Angler's Bay Presentation – John Pearson

<i>Motion was made by Armando Rosales to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Robin Fortney. Motion carried.</i>

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

<i>Motion was made by Liz Christiansen to approve the July 8, 2005 minutes. Seconded by Cindy Peterson.</i>
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Neil Bernstein said that when the Preserves Board discussed Eureka Woods, we did indeed recognize that the county had an alternative to crossing the proposed preserve.

Motion carried with amendment.

RFP FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

Neil Bernstein asked the board if monies should be set aside to complete the management plan for the proposed Glenwood Hospital site.

John Pearson suggested that the Board members visit the site again.

Cindy Peterson said that she could have a draft RFP for Glenwood Hospital by the end of January.

Daryl Howell suggested that we could target the archeological firms to help draw more interest.

The Board discussed how to send out the Request for Proposals.

Laura Jackson encouraged the submitting of management proposals like the ones by Bill Watson.

John Pearson suggested that work opportunities be listed (but not limited) for volunteers on preserves. These could be noted on the proposal.

Cindy Peterson said that pending the approval of the McGregor's and Banister's, she would like to see Eureka Woods added to the preserves Phase I - archaeological survey and possibly omitting a couple of the other preserves.

Cindy will check with Shirley Schermer on certain archeological sites that could be omitted from the RFP so that the Eureka Woods could be added.

Motion was made by Liz Christiansen to approve the RFP with the amendment made by Cindy Peterson to include Eureka Woods (approval pending) on the Phase 1 – archaeological survey. Seconded by Robin Fortney. Motion carried.

TWO NEW PRESERVES DEDICATED

John Pearson said that the Prairie and Fossil Park in Floyd County and Eureka Woods in Greene County were approved for dedication by the Governor in November 2005. The papers have been completed.

An article in the Jefferson newspaper reported that Greene County wants to petition the Governor's decision approving the dedication based from IAC

465C.11. *It shall be held in trust and shall not be alienated except to another public use upon a finding by the board of imperative and unavoidable public necessity and with the approval of the commission, the general assembly by concurrent resolution and the governor.*

John Pearson said that road improvements have been done along the approaches to Eureka Bridge. Guard rails have been erected that block current access into the preserve.

Bill McGregor said that on behalf of Bruce Banister and himself, he appreciates the efforts and approval of the Eureka Woods.

PROPOSED PRESERVES

John Pearson said that there have been two areas proposed to be added to the preserve system:

- 1) Garrison Rock is a 300 acre tract of forest and grassland owned and managed by the Wapello County Conservation Board. Several Board members attended a tour in September. Below is a brief overview of the land.
- 2) Perkins Prairie is a 30 acre privately owned prairie in Greene County. One Board member was able to attend the tour in September but extends the invitation for future visits. The north end has several cables from power lines and the south end is disturbed by past heavy grazing. A majority of the land is native prairie. Some of the flat hilltops have been cultivated. Mr. Perkins would like to reserve a small section of the land to build a house.

Mr. Perkins has done some burning and tree removal on his own. His intentions are to give the land over to his daughter and son-in-law after he passes, which will be in good hands for the next generation. Mr. Perkins is open to whatever boundaries the board approves.

John Pearson said that Mr. Ferguson wants to plant prairie seed as a buffer along the property.

Neil Bernstein asked if the board wanted to move forward with this prairie.

Liz Christiansen said that she would feel comfortable telling Mr. Perkins that the board will move forward. The Board should visit the site.

Motion was made by Robin Fortney to authorize moving forward with the next steps. (John and Daryl visiting with both land owners, sitting up board visits and assisting in a management plan.) Seconded by Liz Christiansen. Motion carried.

PRESENTATION ON A MICROFOSSIL SITE

Bob McKay and Paul Liu presented information on a microfossil site near Decorah. The site is rare and exceptional and may be of interest for consideration by the Preserves Board or some kind of protection.

Bob McKay said that this project started back in 1999, when a water well driller came across unusual geological formation. We have found unusual shale in the subsurface. Samples were tested by Paul Liu for graptolites. None were found, but other rare and unusual microfossils were observed. Between 2004 and the present, they have found a good amount of microfossils. It is a very unusual and rare site. From a geological and paleontology point of view, they believe it is worth preserve status.

Paul Liu, Paleontologist for the Department of Natural Resources, presented the following information:

A new Lagerstätte has been discovered from a recently recognized shale unit within the Ordovician St. Peter Sandstone of northeast Iowa. The fauna includes conodont assemblages and a variety of other fossils, many preserved with associated soft tissue impressions. The greenish-brown to dark-gray laminated shale interval locally occurs between the Tonti and Readstown members of the St. Peter Sandstone and ranges in thickness from zero to 38 meters. An upper Middle Ordovician age is indicated for the new shale unit.

Well preserved conodonts form a prominent component of the fauna. Almost all conodont elements are from the fauna basal plates or jaw-like basal structures. In some cases the basal structure is dissolved leaving a clearly defined cavity. Four or more different types of conodont assemblages have been discovered, consisting of either a single element form taxon or elements previously assigned to different form taxa. Of particular note, two specimens show conodont assemblages associated with integument-like organic films and impressions. One is associated with coniform conodont elements and another occurs with paired conodont elements. These specimens likely represent parts of two different conodont animals. This is only the fourth occurrence worldwide that is known to preserve soft-bodied tissues associated with conodont assemblages.

In addition to conodonts, jawless ostracodern fish, early eurypterids, phyllocarid crustaceans, linguloid brachipods, and other indeterminate fossil forms are also found in the fauna. Soft body tissues, impressions, or even three-dimensionally

preserved organisms are not rare in the unit. This new Lagerstätte will substantially advance our understanding of the paleobiology of various extinct organisms, including early vertebrates, and the paleoenvironment in which they lived and died. This discovery is especially surprising, as the St. Peter Sandstone, noted for its supermature quartz sandstone lithology, has yielded few diagnostic fossils over its vast geographic extent.

These findings were presented at the 2005 Salt Lake City Annual Meeting in October.

Bob McKay said that they have met once with the landowners to explain the science found so far and the significance of the site. We informed them of the state preserves system and land ownership.

Robin Fortney asked how the site would be managed.

Bob McKay said that would need to be discussed amongst the board.

Neil Bernstein said that we should move forward with protecting this site.

John Pearson said that he will arrange for a meeting with the landowners.

<i>Motion was made by Armando Rosales to have John Pearson, Daryl Howell and Bob McKay to meet with the landowners and then advise the preserves board on what to do next. Seconded by Liz Christiansen. Motion carried.</i>

OPEN DISCUSSION

Angler's Bay

John Pearson said this land is the last shoreline that has not been developed on Spirit Lake. Owners Don and Nancy Yarnes had planned to develop shoreline housing here, but others argued such development would destroy the bulrushes. After months of discussion with Mark Ackelson, INHF's president, the Yarnes agreed to sell the land on contract to INHF for eventual public ownership by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (Iowa DNR).

The focus of this preserve would be for aquatic protection. The preserve would go out into the water about 200 feet and stop at the shoreline. There would be about 40 acres of aquatic area. This would be marked with buoys. Boats would be allowed for fishing but only at no wake speeds.

Listed in an article, the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation said that their board approved the financially daunting project to achieve five goals:

- preserve the natural lakeshore, its associated bulrush bed and the critical environmental benefits they provide,
- restore wetlands and establish a diverse prairie on former crop ground,
- protect ecological and recreational values of Hale's Slough,
- provide trail access through the property for the Dickinson County Trail system, and
- secure public ownership and low-impact public use for an Iowa treasure.

Rock Island Update

Neil Bernstein said that the Linn County Conservation Board has had a turn over in their members. The original board members that brought this proposal forward are no longer on the board. John Morris, current president of Linn County Conservation Board wants to go before the board members and get an opinion on whether they want to move forward with preserve status.

Iowa Conservationist articles

Neil Bernstein encouraged the board members to choose a preserve, snap some photographs and write an article for the Conservationist. Those can be submitted to Julie Sparks. Neil agreed to send out the format for the articles.

Liz Christiansen said that the Conservationist will be undergoing a new design. The content will be divided up into basically four parts:

- Young adventurers (kayaking, rock climbing, etc.),
- Young families (recreation and education),
- Travelers (interesting sites to visit in Iowa)
- Those interested in hunting and fishing.

The magazine will be more people oriented.

Robin Fortney said that she would like to see articles on river preserves [and preserves along rivers] and the river clean up canoe trips.

Preserve Visits

Neil Bernstein visited:

Turkey River Mounds – Bill Watson had been trimming some juniper trees.
There is a little garlic mustard but over all it looked fine.
Bixby – looked fine
Fossil Park – looked great

Cindy Peterson visited:

Fossil Park – looked great
Brush Creek Canyon – looked beautiful

Bob McKay visited:

Cold Water Springs – the bridge over the creek is no longer in place. You can't get to the preserve unless you wade across the creek.

John Pearson said that he will ask Terry Hainfield about the status of the bridge.

NEXT MEETING

The next meetings will be held on:

April 13th – Tour of Garrison Rock in Ottumwa

April 14th – Meeting at Pioneer Ridge Nature Center

July 13 - 14 will be held at Cameron Woods near Dixon in Scott County.

September 8th – Tour of Perkins Prairie and the meeting at Boone Research Station in Ledges State Park

ADJOURNMENT

<i>Motion was made by Laura Jackson to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Liz Christiansen. Motion carried.</i>
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With no further business to come before the States Preserves Advisory Board, Chairperson Neil Bernstein adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM on January 6, 2006.

	A		N
Adjournment, 7		Next Meeting, 7	
Angler's Bay, 5			O
Approval of agenda, 1			
Approval of Minutes, 1		Open Discussion, 5	
	B		P
Board Members Present, 1		Preserve Visits, 6	
	C	Preserves newly dedicated, 2	
call to order, 1		Proposed Preserves, 3	
	I		R
Iowa Conservationist articles, 6		RFP for FY 2007, 2	
Iowa Conservationist Articles, 6		Rock Island Update, 6	
	M		S
Microfossils, 4		staff present, 1	

